

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-01

RESOLUTION OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR OF THE CITY OF BELMONT  
APPROVING A SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN REVIEW  
AT 1241 ELMER STREET  
(APPL. NO. 2018-0117)

WHEREAS, Jaime Arafiles, applicant, on behalf of Abhishek Nair, property owner, requests Single-Family Design Review approval to construct an 819 square foot ground-floor addition for a total of 2,221 square feet for the residence at 1241 Elmer Street; and,

WHEREAS, a public hearing was duly noticed, held, and closed on June 26, 2019; and,

WHEREAS, the Zoning Administrator hereby relies upon the staff report dated June 26, 2019 and the facts contained therein, as they pertain to the project, as its own findings of facts; and,

WHEREAS, the Zoning Administrator did hear and use their independent judgment and considered all said reports, recommendations, and testimony as set forth herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Zoning Administrator approves the Single-Family Design Review to construct an 819 square foot ground-floor addition for a total of 2,221 square feet for the residence at 1241 Elmer Street, subject to the attached conditions in Exhibit "A", and based upon the following findings:

Environmental Review

The proposed addition to the single-family home is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by provision of Section 15301, Class 1 (e) (2):

*"Additions to existing structures provided that the addition will not result in an increase of more than:*

*(2) 10,000 square feet, if:*

- A. The project is in an area where all public services and facilities are available to allow for maximum development permissible in the General Plan and*
- B. The area in which the project is located is not environmentally sensitive."*

The 819 square foot addition to the existing residence would occur in an area where all public services and facilities are available to allow for the maximum development permissible in the General Plan. Staff determined that the project is not located in an environmentally-sensitive area because the lot is already developed with a single-family home and is in a neighborhood that has

already been developed with other single-family homes. As such, the area has already been disturbed; this project would simply expand an existing structure. Therefore, the project meets the requirements for CEQA exemption.

### Single-Family Design Review

The required Single-Family Design Review Findings, Section 13A.5 (a-f), are made in the affirmative as follows:

- (a) *The buildings and structures shown on the site plan will be:*
- 1) *Designed to be compatible with any existing development on the site;*
  - 2) *Located and designed to minimize disruptions of existing public views, and to protect the profile of prominent ridgelines.*

The proposed addition would be located at the ground floor and would not increase the height of the existing dwelling. The project does not appear to disrupt any public views as assessed from Elmer Street and the surrounding streets. The proposal does not appear to disrupt the profile of any prominent ridgelines. This finding is affirmed.

- (b) *The overall site and building plans will achieve an acceptable balance of the following factors:*
- 1) *building bulk,*
  - 2) *grading, including:*
    - A) *disturbed surface area, and*
    - B) *total cubic yards, cut and fill.*
  - 3) *The aesthetic impacts of hardscape as viewed from a public vantage point.*

### Building bulk

Under the proposal, the single-story home would be extended to the rear, but the resulting structure would maintain the existing height of less than 18 feet, well below the maximum height limit prescribed in the Belmont Zoning Ordinance. The home would maintain a consistent architectural form and would not mix elements of different styles. The proposed colors and materials would match the existing dwelling.

### Grading/Hardscape

The applicant has not proposed any new hardscape as part of the project. No clearing and grading is required for the site groundwork, as the addition would have minimal impact on the ground area.

All three factors (building bulk, grading, and hardscape) appear to be appropriately addressed in the building design and site/groundwork to achieve an acceptable, complementary balance for the project. This finding is affirmed.

- (c) *All proposed accessory and support features, including driveway and parking surfaces, underfloor areas, retaining walls, utility services and other accessory structures will be integrated into the overall project design.*

The project does not include any new accessory structures. No change has been proposed to the existing utility services. This finding is affirmed.

- (d) *The proposed landscape plan will incorporate:*
- 1) Native plants appropriate to the site's environmental setting and microclimate, and*
  - 2) Appropriate landscape screening of proposed accessory and support structures.*

The property is currently landscaped with grass and shrubbery on-site. The applicant has not proposed any new landscaping; under the project, the current level of landscaping would be maintained. No trees have been proposed for removal. A condition of approval would require that if any portion of the landscape (i.e., existing trees) is damaged during construction-related activities, it must be replaced with consideration given to utilizing drought-tolerant plantings. This finding is affirmed.

- (e) *The project will be in substantial compliance with the Residential Design Guidelines and Residential Design Criteria as applicable.*

Section 4.2.11 of the Belmont Zoning Ordinance provides that additions must comply with the Residential Design Criteria if the new construction includes a ground floor plate height greater than 12 feet, a roof height exceeding 18 feet, or creates or expands an upper floor. The project does not meet any of the aforementioned standards. As such, the proposal is not required to demonstrate compliance with the Residential Design Criteria standards.

The applicant has made significant efforts to ensure the proposed addition would be substantially compliant with the Residential Design Guidelines. The project would maintain a consistent architectural theme and avoid mixing features of different styles. The proposal would match the existing colors and materials to ensure that the addition is compatible with the existing single-family home. The applicant has proposed no grading or alterations to the existing landscaping for the site. Therefore, the project is substantially compliant with the Residential Design Guidelines.

The provisions of the Residential Design Guidelines have been adequately addressed by the proposed design and the project is not required to comply with the Residential Design Criteria standards. This finding is affirmed.

- (f) *City staff and consultants have provided technical review and conditions of approval have been adopted, as applicable, regarding project-related grading, drainage, storm-water runoff, vehicular and pedestrian access, site stability, structural encroachments, and construction impacts.*

As part of the project review process, the City's Department of Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, and Community Development Department (Planning and Building Divisions) have compiled a list of project-specific conditions of approval which would be required during construction. All construction would be completed in compliance with the California Building Code and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) standards as administered by the City of Belmont. This finding is affirmed.

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Passed and adopted at a public hearing of the Zoning Administrator of the City of Belmont held on June 26, 2019 by the following vote:

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Carlos de Melo  
Planning Commission Secretary